Emerging Marketing
Technologies and Trends
Primer for 2016

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Gartner for Marketing Leaders' coverage of key emerging technologies and trends affecting marketing will help marketers develop their strategic view of technology-inspired disruptions and opportunities facing their organizations and careers.

**Scope**

Technology is fundamentally changing the nature of relationships among people, companies and products, unleashing trends that are vital for brands to address. To be successful, marketers must:

- Secure marketing's leadership role in innovation.
- Envision and build cutting-edge experiences that span the digital and physical worlds.
- Use machine intelligence to achieve breakthrough insights and results.
- Understand and manage the hidden challenges of smarter systems.
Machines are getting smarter. It started with an explosion of data, but big data didn’t make machines or the people who use them much smarter. Now machines are getting better at learning, and machine learning is becoming an active force in marketing and competition. Few marketers have caught up with the evolution in machine learning, but those who have are using it to gain important insights into people and what motivates them.

Consumers might not be getting any smarter, but they’re more informed and mercurial, and they’re empowered by personal devices that are getting smarter in how they assist with their goals. Anticipating and meeting the needs and expectations of digitally enhanced consumers in the moment drives the need to automate customer experience applications in real time. This need is pressing marketers to relinquish control to a degree beyond their comfort zone. The stakes for marketing intelligence and execution are rising, yet human motivation often remains inscrutable.

Things, as well, are getting smarter. They’re coalescing in smart environments. They’re powering new experiences such as virtual reality and the physical Web. Almost every waking moment, people and things are exchanging data. The wall between the digital world and the physical world is
crumbling. How do we make sense of it all? The answer lies in knowing how to use — and not use — smart technology.

Top Challenges and How Gartner Can Help

As customer experience becomes the main battleground for competition, business leaders are looking to marketing to lead their organizations’ efforts to innovate experiences. At the same time, skeptics are questioning marketing’s readiness to rise to this challenge. Gartner’s Emerging Marketing Technologies and Trends (EMTT) research agenda will help by providing marketers with the tools they need to lead effective innovation programs that anchor visionary design thinking in real-world possibilities and examples.

How can marketing lead innovation in the enterprise?

Marketing leaders need more than good ideas; they need the institutional credibility to become active leaders in the innovation process. Innovation and customer experience present a special challenge for marketers because they test the traditional boundaries of marketing, inviting the marketer to think expansively about the future of their business and the markets where they operate.

Many organizations have instituted centers of excellence (COEs) for various technologies that are central to marketing, such as mobility and analytics. Successful organizations conceive and operationalize breakthrough improvements that span organizational boundaries, while others struggle to get off the ground. EMTT will help with data and examples that illustrate how leading enterprises allocate resources and budgets for innovation. Marketers can use this information as a source of inspiration and to provide credible, objective support for their innovation initiatives.

Planned Research

- **A Scenario for the Future of Algorithmic Marketing** will examine how smart machines will impact marketing organizations and processes as they alter the relationship between people and enterprise technology services.
- **Cutting-Edge Customer Experience (CX)** is ground zero for marketing innovation. This research will examine its critical elements.

How can you anticipate and exploit disruptions?

Digital businesses are reordering value chains and revolutionizing customer experience. From Uber to Netflix, disrupters are destabilizing mature markets, where volatility often puts marketing on the front lines. In order to cope, marketers need to be able to anticipate disruptions and develop scenarios for how to respond. Disruption generally can’t be addressed by marketing alone. Successful marketers, however, can take a leadership role by providing the vision and customer-centric mindset to best inform strategic planning.
As a marketer, your natural advantage is an understanding of what motivates people to change their behavior. Whether it’s the convenience of TaskRabbit, the health benefits of a Fitbit, or the dedication of a brand like Dove to the cause of women’s self-esteem, disruption comes from addressing human needs and desires in new ways.

EMTT’s coverage of future scenarios and emerging technologies impacting customer experience will provide a foundation for understanding technical and social roots of disruption and assessing its impact and implications.

Planned Research

- **The Intelligent Venue** will look at how smart things and mobile devices are altering the relationship between people and commercial environments.

- **A Day in the Life With Smart Homes and Cars** will examine how everyday experiences are being reformulated with embedded intelligence.

How should we prioritize investments in technology and skills?

The landscape of new technologies is cluttered and vast. Marketing leaders need a way to filter and navigate through its complexities to arrive at clear, defensible plans. Many organizations are plagued by the "shiny object" syndrome and mistake hype for value. Gartner provides a proven treatment for this affliction with tools such as Hype Cycles that objectively rate the impact and velocity of new technologies and Cool Vendors reports that handpick the "coolest" of the cool.

EMTT adds to this foundation with Gartner’s digital marketing transit map, which provides a comprehensive, up-to-date view of the entire digital marketing landscape.

Planned Research

- **Cool Vendors reports** (e.g., digital commerce, content marketing, data-driven marketing, digital advertising and social marketing) will showcase noteworthy technology innovations.

- "**Hype Cycle for Digital Marketing, 2016**" will examine the maturity, velocity and impact of key technologies impacting digital marketing.

How can you understand the power and limitations of machines in marketing?

Marketers need a new relationship with technology. They need to balance the great power of technology with its profound inability to empathize with the essential values and beliefs that motivate human behavior.

The push toward algorithmic marketing is a blessing and a curse. Properly harnessed, algorithms can uncover deep insights and turn them into personalized relevance at scale. Digital leaders like Amazon and Facebook show us how powerful this can be. Yet, algorithms also have a way of producing unintended consequences, such as making consumers feel their privacy has been compromised or placing an ad in an inappropriate context. Even when misfires are less glaring, overreliance on algorithms can compromise a brand in more subtle ways, such as conditioning
customers to always expect discounts or missing out on an important trend that a competitor has latched onto.

EMTT will help marketers learn from best practices illustrating effective (and ineffective) ways to use tech and analytics.

**Planned Research**

- **Beyond Advanced Analytics** will examine the systems and skills needed to move data-driven marketing to the next level of incorporating machine learning and artificial intelligence.
- **Invasion of the Robot Copywriters** will explore just how close machines have come to emulating some of the most human functions in marketing.

**Related Priorities**

**Table 1. Related Priorities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data-Driven Marketing</td>
<td>Data-driven marketing (DDM) applies data and analytics to planning and execution processes in order to increase marketing's efficiency and effectiveness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multichannel Marketing</td>
<td>Multichannel marketing represents orchestrated interaction across digital and traditional customer touchpoints to acquire, grow and retain customers, engaging audiences and extending relationships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile Marketing</td>
<td>Mobile marketing involves using information about people's context (location, identity, relationships and intentions) to tailor information and products that increase customer engagement and sales.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customer Experience</td>
<td>Today, 89% of marketers compete primarily on the basis of customer experience — discrete moments that, together, strengthen or weaken a customer's preference, loyalty and advocacy.</td>
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Source: Gartner (January 2016)

**Suggested First Steps**

- "Top 10 Strategic Technology Trends for 2016: At a Glance"
- "When Smart Things Rule the World — Introducing Autonomous Business"

**Essential Reading**

- "Understand Marketing’s Role in Digital Business"
- "Realize the Marketing Impact of New Technology"
"Convince Your CMO to Invest in the Internet of Things"

Analyst Profiles
Andrew Frank
Charles S. Golvin
Kirsten Newbold-Knipp

More on This Topic
This is part of an in-depth collection of research. See the collection:

- Gartner for Marketing Leaders' Research Overview for 2016
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For a complete list of worldwide locations, visit http://www.gartner.com/technology/about.jsp
Digital has redefined the role of marketing, adding new players and creating bigger complexities.

Gartner for Marketers helps you get up to speed on and stay smarter in the eight marketing areas that matter most: social, mobile, multichannel and data-driven marketing, digital commerce, customer experience, marketing management, and emerging marketing technology & trends.

Our clients say that they use our real-time, expert advice and objective research, data and tools to:

- Target the right audiences
- Choose the right channels
- Quickly shortlist marketing and technology providers
- Stay informed on market and competitors
- Save time and avoid costly mistakes

Gartner helps companies improve their business results through the use of technology. Our independent research and advice is trusted by business and technology leaders in more than 10,000 distinct enterprises around the world.

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